(e) and (f) The Government has received representation from some States on the new National Mineral Policy, 2008, raising concerns on the need to allow the State Government to give preference to value addition within the state, policy on seamless transition, security of tenure, need to strengthen Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and allow preferential treatment in grant of mineral concessions to PSUs, apart from requesting for levy of royalty on *ad valorem* basis. These issues had been considered and appropriately addressed by the Government before the enunciation of National Mineral Policy, 2008.

Dead rent on mines

2871. SHRI SYED AZEEZ PASHA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken a decision to revise the dead rent on mines, especially on iron;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) to (c) Rates of dead rent were last revised on 14.10.2004. A Study Group was constituted by Ministry of Mines to *inter alia* suggest revision of rates of dead rent on minerals including iron ore. The Study Group has submitted its report to the Central Government, which is under consideration.

New Mineral Policy

2872. SHRI JESUDASU SEELAM: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently, both the Houses of Parliament expressed serious concern over the delay in finalizing the mineral policy,

(b) whether the Union Cabinet has referred the mining policy to GoM, headed by the Home Minister, to address the issues facing both the Steel and mining industries and has recommended a policy, conducive for the overall growth of both the industries;

(c) whether GoM has already submitted its recommendations in this regard;

(d) by when Government is likely to announce the policy; and

(e) to what extent this new policy would help in simplifying mining rules and regulations?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) to (e) The Government has enunciated its new National Mineral Policy, 2008, which is available on the website of the Ministry of Mines (http://mines.nic.in). The new Policy was also referred to GoM under the chairmanship of Home Minister. The new National Mineral Policy envisages streamlining and simplifying the procedures in grant of mineral concessions in order to attrack investment into mining sector.

Sapphire reserves in Jammu and Kashmir

†2873. MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Jammu and Kashmir has the best of Sapphire reserves in the world;

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether the Sapphire is being extracted stealthily from the mines for the last thirty years unabatedly, owing to negligence of Government;

(c) whether the Sapphire mines are located in inaccessible Padar area of Doda in Jammu Division;

(d) whether 21,638 gms of Sapphire has been auctioned recently;

(e) the quantity of Sapphire extracted by Jammu Kashmir Minerals Ltd. during the last nine years from these mines; and

(f) the decision taken to take effective steps in order to prevent theft of Sapphire?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) Yes, Sir. Some of the famous royal blue and green varieties of Sapphire were obtained in Padar deposits in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir in the past.

(b) The information pertaining to the illegal extraction of Sapphire comes under the purview of the State Government.

(c) Yes, Sir. Sapphire mines are located in the inaccessible Padar area of Doda district, Jammu.

(d) to (f) The information comes under the purview of the State Government and the Ministry of Mines does not maintain this information.

National Mineral Policy, 2008

2874. DR. V. MAITREYAN: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Cabinet has given its approval for the National Mineral Policy, 2008;

(b) if so, the salient features of the Policy;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government is considering opening up the mining schemes to attract more FDI and if so, the estimated inflow of FDI for the mineral sector;

(d) whether Government has accepted the Hoda Commission report *in toto*, before finalizing the Policy; and

(e) which State would be benefited by this new Policy?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The new National Mineral Policy has enunicated policy measures like assured right to next mineral concession, transferability of mineral concessions and transparency in allotment of concessions, in order to reduce delays which are seen as impediments to investment and technology flow in the mining sector in India. The Mining Policy also seeks to develop a sustainable framework for optimum utilization of the country's natural minerals resources for the industrial growth in the country and at the same time improving the life of people living in the mining areas, which are generally located in the backward and tribal regions of the country. The new National Mineral Policy, 2008 is available on the website of Ministry of Mines (http://mines.nic.in)

(c) The new Policy envisages for simplifying the procedures to reduce delay in grant of mineral concession in order to attract investment including FDI into mining sector. FDI of about $ 250 crore per annum is expected in the mining sector from the 5th year of implementation of the new National Mineral Policy.